

which have always been the backbone of our economy. Many small business owners are holding off hiring new workers because they're uncertain of higher taxes, more government red tape, more regulations.

We must remove unnecessary regulations. We need to promote real solutions that heal our economy and create new jobs. Americans share the same goal: a healthy economy and positive future. We need to keep the American Dream alive for future generations.

RETURN BUFFALO TO THE URBAN AREA SECURITY INITIATIVE PROGRAM

(Mr. HIGGINS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, this week, the House will take up Homeland Security appropriations legislation for fiscal year 2014. Unfortunately, this legislation, once again, limits the number of cities in the Urban Area Security Initiative program to 25. This is unacceptable. It excludes many cities that have been determined to be a high risk of a terror threat.

The Buffalo-Niagara region, which I represent, includes four international border crossings and the busiest passenger crossing along the northern border with Canada; the largest electricity producer in New York State; and is within a 500-mile radius of 55 percent of the American population and 62 percent of the Canadian population. Recently, authorities thwarted a terror plot in which the target is thought to have been a bridge in Niagara Falls. It is unthinkable this bill should continue to exclude Buffalo from this important program it was once eligible for.

Mr. Speaker, protecting the homeland should be a Federal Government priority. We should be doing more, not less, to protect our most vulnerable cities, including returning cities to this program and ensuring we maintain the capabilities gained under the program.

FREE SPEECH

(Mrs. MILLER of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, the First Amendment of our Constitution is first because nothing is more important to secure liberty and freedom of speech and freedom of the press than our First Amendment.

There are currently two scandals that put into question the President's commitment to this sacred freedom, with the Justice Department secretly obtaining phone records of reporters at the Associated Press and Fox News, and the IRS targeting certain groups because of their political beliefs.

Yesterday, the Ways and Means Committee held a hearing with the victims of the IRS abuse, and we learned that

IRS officials not only asked many inappropriate questions to members of these groups, like what books they read or what was in their prayers, but also tried to tell free Americans who they could not protest against, and even illegally released private tax records to groups with opposing viewpoints.

Freedom of speech and freedom of the press should never be in question in this Nation, Mr. Speaker. Certainly, we can all agree that units of the Federal Government should never use their powers to punish Americans simply because of their ideas. This House will get to the bottom of this issue by following the facts. These free people, our great patriots, deserve no less.

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PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT

(Mr. BARROW of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARROW of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, this is the 50th anniversary of the Equal Pay Act, and I rise to urge my colleagues to strengthen that law by passing the Paycheck Fairness Act.

I'm a proud cosponsor of the Paycheck Fairness Act because, even today, working women in my district in Georgia and across the country earn, on average, 77 cents for every dollar that men earn for the same work. That's because the penalties under the current law aren't strong enough to deter employers from breaking the law. And the current law doesn't protect employees from retaliation for sharing salary information with coworkers. The Paycheck Fairness Act will plug these loopholes in the law.

Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to stand here today with so many of my colleagues to call for the passage of these long-overdue improvements in this landmark law. Every day we ignore the shortcomings of the law is another day we deny women their rights under the law, and that should end right now.

OBAMACARE

(Mr. BUCSHON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss ObamaCare's assault on jobs and full-time employment. The law is costing wages that are important to families in these tough economic times.

I received an email from a constituent in my district who is a teacher's assistant. Because of the 30 hours that is considered full-time employment in the Affordable Care Act, her hours have been cut to 28 hours a week, along with all of her colleagues. She stated:

I don't even need health insurance, I get it through my husband's employment. But be-

cause of this bill, I will be losing money that my family needs and depends on.

Indiana is also home to over 300 medical device companies, with an economic impact of over \$10 billion a year. Companies in Indiana, like Cook Medical, have already scrapped plans for expansion in the State, citing the 2.3 percent medical device tax.

Yesterday, I discussed with Secretary Sebelius the vote in the Senate, 79-20, and the vote in the last House Congress, 270-146—including 37 Democrats—to repeal the law, but the administration sticks by the fact that they do not want that part of the law repealed.

Mr. Speaker, this administration has been telling Americans for the last 5 years that they are trying to create jobs, but they're refusing to acknowledge the jobs that are being lost because of their health care bill.

STUDENT LOAN RATES

(Mr. CARTWRIGHT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, by 2018, 63 percent of all American job openings are going to require some sort of post-high school education. Workers who hold bachelor's degrees make, on average, double the people who don't have bachelor's degrees.

Now, if we fail to take responsible action this month, student loan rates are going to double on 7.4 million American students. At a time when other interest rates are at historic lows, this body passed H.R. 1911, a bill that would make college more expensive.

I urge this body to pass H.R. 1433, to hold interest rates where they are in order to broaden opportunities and allow everybody a piece of the American Dream.

HONORING DR. JOSEPH COX

(Mr. MEEHAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an educator, leader, author, and role model for young men in Pennsylvania.

This week, Dr. Joseph Cox will preside over his final commencement ceremony as headmaster of the Haverford School, a secondary school for boys in Haverford Township, Delaware County.

Dr. Cox took office as Haverford's headmaster in 1998; and since then, he has led the school and its faculty with his firm belief that teachers and boys must be "firm, fair, funny, focused, and friendly." These qualities were the backbone of Dr. Cox's philosophy of teaching.

Dr. Cox has set a long example for men outside the classroom as well. He's a 30-year Army veteran, serving his country in Vietnam, commanding a battalion of the famous 101st Airborne Division and retiring as a colonel.